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ADDRESS

ON THE

LIFE, CHARACTER, AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

WILLIAM McKINLEY

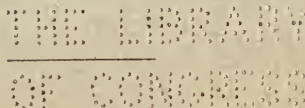
DELIVERED

BEFORE THE MCKINLEY ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT,
AT NEW HAVEN, JANUARY 29, 1904

BY

FRANK B. BRANDEGEE

M. C. FROM CONNECTICUT



WASHINGTON, D. C.

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ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN OF THE MCKINLEY ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT :

Before entering upon the particular subject of my address I desire to express my deep gratification at the high honor conferred upon me by your invitation to this banquet, and my appreciation of the very flattering compliment implied in your selection of me as one of the speakers of this evening; nor can I refrain from congratulating this Association upon its organization, its distinguished membership, and this magnificent assemblage in celebration of its nativity. It is particularly fitting that this gathering should be held in the city of New Haven, at once the seat of a famous university of learning and a representative of the culture and refinement of all that is best and highest in American life, American ideals, and American citizenship. The Republican party has always stood for education, for freedom, for morality, and for national prosperity. By your formation of this club you have shown that Republicanism in Connecticut is a harmonious, united, aggressive, and enthusiastic force, and that you are proud of your past history and confident of a glorious future. In your choice of a name you have paid homage to the memory of one of our

most beloved leaders and one of the greatest statesmen of the age, and in the number and character of your members you give evidence that Republican principles and policies are still cherished by the intelligence and good citizenship of our historic Commonwealth. You have entered upon a field of vast usefulness and influence, and will prove an inspiration and a tower of strength to the cause of good government in both State and Nation.

A NATION MOURNS.

On Thursday, the nineteenth day of September, 1901, this country presented a remarkable spectacle. On that day, for a period of five minutes after half past two o'clock in the afternoon, the whole nation stood still with bated breath. From the St. Lawrence to the Mexican gulf and from the Atlantic to the Golden Gate, human activity ceased. The rush of business was stilled. The hum of industry was hushed. Commerce was suspended. No wheel turned. Every sound was quieted. A solemn silence prevailed throughout the land. Great funeral parades halted and stood at attention. Railroad trains on the mountain sides, steamships on the rivers, and street cars in the cities—all came to a stop, wherever they were. The electric telegraph forbore its nervous clicking, silenced by the sorrow that does not speak. Eighty millions of people stood with bared heads and reverent hearts while the bells of all the churches in the land tolled in mournful expression of a

nation's grief. The mortal remains of William McKinley were being tenderly committed to their last resting place. The trinity of martyr Presidents was complete. For the third time in our history the head of this free Republic had been laid low by the hand of an assassin. The beloved chief magistrate, the gallant soldier, the profound statesman, the great debater, the famous orator, the idol of the people, after fifty-eight years of life devoted to his country's service, had been murdered, for no intelligible reason, by a vile miscreant so obscure that it was with difficulty that he could be identified. Sorrow and mourning and horror for the dastardly deed were not confined to this land. The civilized world sympathized in our bereavement and joined in our deep affliction. Canada, Mexico, and the nations of the Old World paid loving tribute to the departed President. In London, solemn obsequies were held in the stately cathedral of St. Paul's, and the princes of church and state thronged the Abbey of Westminster—England's imperial mausoleum of the illustrious dead of a thousand years—to honor his great name. We are assembled here to recall his memory, to recount his achievements, and to take to our hearts the lessons to be learned from his distinguished services and his lofty character. What were those services and whence were derived those intellectual and moral qualities which raised him from the obscure station of a poor country boy to the chief magistracy of the grandest and freest nation in all the tide of time?

DESCENT AND BOYHOOD.

William McKinley was of Scotch-Irish descent—that mingled blood which has furnished such a long list of illustrious names to the annals of the Anglo-Saxon race. He inherited the prudence and tenacity of purpose which belong to the Scotch, together with that versatility and gift of eloquence which are characteristic of the Irish race. His father, also named William, was born November 15, 1807, on the Dougherty farm, in Mercer county, Pennsylvania. At the age of twenty-two the father married Nancy Campbell Allison. Of this union nine children were born—four boys and five girls. The senior McKinley was a manager of iron furnaces, and while engaged in that occupation at Niles, Ohio, whither he had moved, William McKinley, Junior, was born there on January 29, 1843, just sixty years ago today. From Niles they moved to Poland, Ohio, to take advantage of the educational facilities afforded by the Poland Academy. At this time the future President was only a child; and his boyhood was spent in the little agricultural and mining village of Poland. This place is the most southeastern township of the original Western Reserve, and one of the original land company from Connecticut settled there. From the age of fourteen to eighteen young McKinley attended the academy, read law in the evening until midnight, assisted the village postmaster in his work, taught school, and devoted himself to the varied tasks

by which a country boy might contribute toward his support. At the age of sixteen he became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Poland, and was a constant attendant and a close and earnest student in his Bible class. Even at this early age he gave evidence of his talent for debate, and soon became the leader of the village debating society. His parents were hard-working and God-fearing people—serious, industrious, moral, and of the strictest integrity. His father died in 1892, at the advanced age of eighty-five years, and his mother lived to the ripe age of nearly ninety years, and died in 1897, with her son, then President, at her bedside. In this Christian home of frugal habits the foundations of his character were laid broad and deep, and they never failed him in after life. In 1860 the irrepressible conflict drew near. Abraham Lincoln, with the inspiration of a prophet of old, had riveted the attention of the world by the words which seared themselves into the minds of men, "This country cannot permanently endure half slave and half free." The country at once perceived the truth and the awful portent of the statement. The fact had long lain half hidden in the consciousness of men; but, hoping and praying for a solution of the problem, they had refused to contemplate the terrible alternative. Now they were face to face with the momentous issue. The policy of compromise, which had been the sole aim and result of the highest statesmanship for a generation, was abandoned. Lincoln became President. The secession of States began and continued. The military

arm of the nation had been despoiled and paralyzed. Treason lurked in every department of the Government and in every branch of the public service. The Union appeared to be tottering to its destruction. Chaos and anarchy seemed at hand. Sumter was fired upon and taken, and the nation's flag was hauled down and trampled in the dust. Lincoln called for volunteers, and his appeal was met with a patriotic uprising throughout the entire North. One instance will illustrate the prevailing spirit. In a small village of the West there was an old tavern, called the Sparrow inn, which had been built soon after the Revolutionary war. It was one of the stations for fugitive slaves on the "underground route" to Canada. On a day in June, 1861, the inhabitants had assembled there. A speaker, pointing to the Stars and Stripes which hung on the wall, said with impassioned utterance: "Our country's flag has been shot at. It has been trailed in the dust by those who should defend it; dishonored by those who should have cherished and loved it. And for what? That this free Government may keep a race in the bondage of slavery. Who will be the first to defend it?" A silence like death ensued. For an interval no movement was made. Then a lad pushed forward into the space in front of the speaker. He was a slender, gray-eyed youth, with a serious, thoughtful face, indicating both sweetness and strength, a frank and open gaze, a noble brow, and a strong curved nose. It was William McKinley.

ENLISTS IN THE ARMY.

He volunteered and at once enlisted in Company E of the Twenty-third Ohio Volunteer Infantry, on June 11, 1861, at the age of eighteen years. This regiment was composed largely of young men of New England descent. McKinley was only a boy and enlisted as a private. His career in the army was highly creditable. He discharged every duty faithfully and was repeatedly commended for bravery and efficiency. He was brevetted for gallant conduct on the bloody field of Antietam, and, as a staff officer, was constantly employed as a bearer of dispatches in the thick of the hottest fights. It was young McKinley who guided Sheridan through the rout of the Union army to the quarters of General Crook on the day of Sheridan's famous ride from Winchester, which resulted in transforming a threatened disaster into a decisive victory. Within a year of the time of his enlistment he was promoted to the rank of commissary sergeant; within six months from that date he was promoted to be second lieutenant; five months afterwards he became a first lieutenant; after another five months he was made a captain. Eight months passed, and he was detailed as acting assistant adjutant general of the first division, first army corps, on the staff of General Carroll, and brevetted major. He was mustered out of service July 26, 1865, having served with conspicuous bravery through the entire war. He had been a member of the staffs of Generals

Hayes, Crook, Hancock, and Sheridan. McKinley's regiment, the Twenty-third Ohio, contained many men afterwards highly distinguished. At the time of its formation its colonel was William S. Rosecrans, subsequently a famous general. Its lieutenant-colonel was Stanley Matthews, afterwards United States Senator from Ohio and a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. Its first major was Rutherford B. Hayes, who subsequently became an able general, thrice governor of his State, and President of the United States. McKinley hated war. It was foreign to his whole nature. To use his own words, "Peace is the national desire and the goal of every American aspiration. The best sentiment of the civilized world is moving toward the settlement of differences between nations without resorting to the horrors of war. Let us ever remember that our interest is in concord, not conflict; and that our real eminence rests in the victories of peace, not those of war. We love peace better than war, and our swords never should be drawn except in a righteous cause, and then never until every effort at peace and arbitration shall be exhausted."

Nevertheless, had he remained in the army, he was endowed with those attributes which would undoubtedly have made him a great commander. He had entered the service not because of a taste for a military career, but solely because he knew his country needed him at that time and needed him there most of all. Fidelity to duty was the mainspring of his existence. Duty called and he obeyed. The rough life, the temptations and passions which are so apt to vitiate

the character of the soldier in time of war, found him proof against their insidious influences. His nature and character were impregnable against the assaults of evil, and, like a Crusader of old, he emerged from the four years' conflict with morals and purposes elevated and fortified by the experiences of the most gigantic rebellion in history.

RETURNS TO CIVIL LIFE.

He was now only twenty-two years of age—a youth in years, but a full man, measured by the experience and responsibilities of life. He at once returned to his home in Poland and re-entered civil life. He studied law with Judge Glidden, and also at the Albany Law School, and in 1867 he was admitted to the bar, and immediately began the practice of his profession in Canton, whither he had moved. Within two years he was elected prosecuting attorney of Stark county, a stronghold of Democracy, and, during a brilliant and aggressive campaign, first gave public evidence upon the stump of that wonderful ability which placed him in the very foremost rank of the world's greatest debaters. In 1871 he married Miss Ida Saxton, the daughter of a banker and leading citizen of Canton, and for the next five years devoted himself to his profession, and won enviable distinction as a lawyer, especially as an advocate in the trial of causes to the jury.

ENTERS PUBLIC LIFE.

In 1876 he was elected a Representative in Congress, and from this date his career, as known to the people at large, may be said to have begun. He was then only thirty-three years of age. Most of the famous congressional careers have been made by men who entered the House in the strength of young manhood. Garfield, Blaine, Conkling, Reed, Clay, Webster, and Lincoln—all began their congressional life as young men. The Eighteenth Ohio district, which McKinley represented, was a manufacturing and mining district, and while McKinley inherited the tariff ideas of a Henry Clay Whig, his protective views were doubtless strengthened by his careful analysis of the needs of his constituency. He had hardly been two years in Congress when, the Wood tariff bill being under discussion, in 1878, McKinley delivered a speech in opposition which forthwith made for him a national reputation and, upon the election of Garfield to the Presidency two years later, secured for him Garfield's place on the Ways and Means Committee. Judge Kelley, of Pennsylvania, who, from his loyalty to the great metal industry of his State, earned the soubriquet of "Pig Iron Kelley," was at that time the leading exponent of the principle of protection to American industries. He saw at once that a new champion had been raised up for the "American system," and when he laid aside the mantle of leadership he placed it on McKinley's shoulders.

HIS LIFE WORK.

And now McKinley was in the midst of the most distinctive work of his life, and henceforth there is hardly a page of American history which does not bear the imprint of his genius. For the next twenty years the tariff was an issue in every State, congressional, and national campaign. McKinley was always in the thick of the fight. Indeed, he came to be the center about which the conflict raged. So completely had he impressed his views upon his party and, through it, upon the country, that the protective policy was everywhere popularly known as "McKinleyism." At home and abroad he was acknowledged to be the preëminent exponent, not only of a protective tariff, but of a tariff *for* protection. So strong is political ambition in Ohio and so numerous are the aspirants for the honors of public life, that it was the custom in that State to allow to a Representative in Congress only two terms; but McKinley so dominated his district and became a figure of such national importance that for fifteen years no other name in his party was mentioned to succeed him. Time and again his district was gerrymandered against him, and as often did he put his opponents to rout and wrest victory from the very jaws of defeat against great odds. While I had no close acquaintance with Mr. McKinley, I had met him and heard him on several occasions. I was a member of two national conventions to which he was also a delegate and

in the proceedings of which he took conspicuous part. He presided over one of them, that at Minneapolis in 1892. I had also met and had friendly conversation with him in the White House and had attended the convention in Philadelphia which nominated him for the Presidency in 1900.

HIS PERSONAL TRAITS.

His appearance was most impressive. A natural dignity of manner clothed him as with a garment. He was of medium height, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, and of a strong, compact build. He possessed great physical strength and had enormous power of endurance. His capacity for work was marvelous. He had a splendid head and countenance. One of his personal friends said of him, "His face was cast in a classic mold; you see faces like it in antique marble in the galleries of the Vatican and in the portraits of the great cardinal-statesmen of Italy." His forehead was broad and massive; his eyebrows were very thick and bushy; his eyes were gray and piercing and set far back under his overhanging brow. His nose was like the beak of an eagle; his mouth was broad and firm and his chin was square and cleft in the middle. He was always perfectly smooth-shaven and scrupulously neat. His ear was of the large and generous type and his hair was straight and rather long in the back of the neck. He uniformly wore a black frock coat, a black string tie, and a tall hat. He had an air of "breeding" and the noble gravity of a

Senator of the Roman Republic. He was perfectly cool and self-possessed. He never lost control of himself or of the situation. He was well poised and of unerring judgment. In forming his conclusions he was careful, deliberate, and painstaking, and when, upon reflection, he had arrived at a decision, he was firm and inflexible. His long experience in debate had taught him to weigh his words, and a certain caution and discretion in speech had become habitual with him, so that he rarely had to explain or modify a statement. He was temperate in all things. He was tactful, even-tempered, kindly, considerate, and of infinite patience. In the hottest debates and the fiercest contests he gave no offense and bore no malice. He treated an opponent with a deference and courtesy that approached the chivalrous, and in the battles of the forum his shield always bore the motto, "*Noblesse oblige.*" His convictions were of that intense earnestness which characterizes religious faith, and he always had the courage of them.

His belief in the American people was unbounded. He was intensely American. With him patriotism amounted to a passion. He loved the great army of toilers, the bone and sinew, the hope and the support of the Republic, whom Lincoln was wont to call the plain people. He expressed this sentiment in the words: "I am for America because America is for the common people." He loved and trusted the masses as no other statesman—Lincoln alone excepted—has ever done. And the intelligent democracy of the country instinctively returned the confidence he reposed in them.

His sincerity was never doubted and his good faith and singleness of purpose were apparent to the least discerning. He had the austere virtue of the ancient Covenanter, but was free from all hypocrisy, cant and self-righteousness. He fawned upon no man and he looked down upon none. He had that pride, the product of a wholesome self-respect, which does not permit undue familiarity, but he was the most accessible and approachable of men. His industry was absolutely unflagging. Whatever thing he undertook he conducted with the most indefatigable persistence. His attention to details was amazing. He pursued his object with undeviating pertinacity and with the most intense earnestness. He read, he studied, he marshaled facts and authorities; he collected and collated statistics; he tabulated reports; he managed an enormous correspondence; he examined the diversified industries of the land in their most minute ramifications; he scrutinized the press and kept abreast of current trade literature; he investigated the causes of business phenomena; he questioned employer and workman, producer and consumer, native and foreigner. All day long he was to be found in his committee-room, hearing and weighing the conflicting claims of all sorts of interests from all parts of the country. Every night until past midnight he was at his rooms in the Ebbitt House, buried in his books and papers and in consultation with his colleagues, who flocked to see him. At times he was in the minority, struggling to preserve such parts of the protective system as might be saved from the free-trade onslaughts of

the victorious majority. Again, he was inspiring his own party, doubting and wavering after some defeat, with his own sublime courage and confidence.

AHEAD OF HIS PARTY.

He had always been in advance of his party upon the great issue with which his name has been more particularly associated. At times some of the Republican leaders thought he was too far in advance. In one of the fiercest battles of the rebellion a Union regiment had advanced until it seemed impossible that a single life could survive the storm of shot and shell which rained upon it. The colonel was about to order his men to fall back when his attention was suddenly drawn to the color sergeant, a young boy, who, proudly bearing aloft the tattered Stars and Stripes, was still advancing through the leaden hail. The colonel, in stentorian tones, called out, "Sergeant, bring those colors back to the line!" The young hero, with heightened color and flashing eyes, pointing to the old flag, for which he was willing to give his life, responded, "Colonel, bring the line up to the colors!" William McKinley planted the flag of the Republican party upon the American policy of protection to American industries, American wages, and American workmen, and then brought the party up to the colors. It is due to him, more than to any other, that this patriotic policy is now firmly established as the fixed law of the land.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE.

He had served on the great Committee on Ways and Means for ten consecutive years, when, upon the death of William D. Kelley, in 1890, he became its chairman and the leader of his party in name as well as in fact upon the floor of the House. He introduced and secured the passage of the bill which bore his name—the famous McKinley tariff law. In certain sections the passage of this law was the signal of an outburst of hysterical fury. It was violently attacked and misrepresented. Although the country was in the height of prosperity, a reaction against the Republican party set in, and this fact, together with the unfair rearrangement of his district by his political opponents, now driven to desperation, defeated McKinley for reëlection; but in the new district, composed of counties which had previously given Democratic majorities of three thousand, he was defeated by only three hundred votes. His opponents now flattered themselves that they were rid of their most dangerous foe. Trickery, however, rarely profits its authors, and this is preëminently true of political chicanery. Like the boomerang, it returns to destroy its promoter.

GOVERNOR OF OHIO.

In 1891 the Republicans of Ohio were spared the task of selecting a candidate for governor. Their opponents had done that for them. The whole State called for McKinley.

After a brilliant campaign, which was watched by the whole nation, he was elected governor by a plurality of over twenty-one thousand. Two years later, as the result of a still more dramatic campaign, he was reëlected by what at that time was the unheard-of plurality of over eighty thousand.

DEMOCRATIC HARD TIMES.

Grover Cleveland was now President and the country was in the depths of despondency. The triumphant Democracy, in spite of the most solemn warnings and protests, devoid of statesmanship, but drunk with the pride of power and place and impelled by a blind and reckless spirit of partisan revenge, had repealed the McKinley law and enacted in its stead a statute so imbecile, so inequitable, and so wantonly destructive as to deserve the anathema hurled at it in advance by a disgusted Democratic President, who characterized it as a measure of "perfidy and dishonor."

To emphasize his contempt for this measure, Mr. Cleveland declined either to sign it or to veto it, and it became a law without his signature. The wreck and devastation produced by this disastrous legislation, of dubious origin and paternity, is still fresh in the public mind. Capital everywhere fled to cover. Industry was paralyzed. Commerce languished. Factories closed their doors. Great mills shut down and armies of idle artisans begged in the streets. Public soup houses dispensed a scanty fare to famishing mechanics. Skilled workmen besought employment

at any wage, however small. There were no strikes then—there was nothing to strike against. The panic of '93 came and left financial ruin in its path. The great commercial houses, the banks and exchanges of the country, valiantly exerted themselves to stay the progress of calamity, but in vain. The business heart of the nation still throbbed, but with a feeble and intermittent pulse. The whole country lay prostrate. Universal stagnation prevailed. From out the doubt and perplexity and anguish of mind, the voice of the nation anxiously inquired, "Why is it, that amid all the mighty resources of the land, we are suffering?" Back came the reply from McKinley, "I can answer in a word. The Democrats are running the Government, and nothing else is running. Every industry is practically stopped; no man can calculate the loss to the people of this country in investment, property, and wages. We have been at school. It has been a universal, a sort of compulsory education, from the benefits of which none have been excluded. While the tuition has been free, the ultimate cost has been very great. We have been blessed with experience, if we have not been blessed with anything else. When confidence is shaken, misfortunes come—not singly, but in battalions—and suffering falls on every community. No part of our population is exempt." The country heard the answer and knew that it was sufficient and true. It had elected to try the "tariff reform" policy of the Democracy and had been plunged by it from the pinnacle of prosperity to the abyss of bankruptcy. It had now learned wisdom in the school of a bitter experience.

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

The presidential election of 1896 drew nigh. The demand for McKinley as the candidate of the Republican party became widespread and insistent. He of all others personified the American policy of protection. So confident was the country that his nomination would restore good times that he was called "the advance agent of prosperity." But other names were pressed for the nomination—men who had achieved fame as orators, leaders, and statesmen. That matchless parliamentarian of the House, Thomas B. Reed of Maine; that wise and peerless Nestor of the Senate, William B. Allison; that sterling governor of the Empire State, Levi P. Morton; that astute and powerful political general of the Keystone State, Matthew Stanley Quay, and many other favorite sons, all had their enthusiastic supporters and admirers.

A POLITICAL NAPOLEON.

At this juncture there arose a man previously unknown to the country at large, but one whose name had meant success in every field in which his energies had been employed. He saw that the people wanted McKinley, but that his nomination was in danger from the manipulations of rival political interests. He resolved that the people should not be thwarted in their desire. Up to that time he had had no political experience, but he had a

mighty brain, a large and powerful acquaintance among men, an indomitable will, a marvelous genius for organization, a resistless energy, a contagious enthusiasm, an abiding and unshakable faith in Republican principles, and a boundless confidence in and a measureless love and respect for William McKinley. This man was Marcus A. Hanna. He put himself at the head of the McKinley movement and in a canvass which for brilliancy, dash, and skill stands unique in political annals, effected McKinley's nomination by more than a two-thirds vote of the convention on the first ballot. In an address to the Union Club at Cleveland, Senator Hanna has described this event. Said he: "About two years ago—not quite that long—I began my work of devotion and love to our chief. Two years ago I took from him my inspiration. When he laid upon me that confidence and said to me, 'My friend, I trust you with my future,' he also said, 'Mark, there are some things I will not do to be President of the United States, and I leave my honor in your hands.' I embarked upon that duty with a full heart for a man whom I loved, because I had learned to respect and honor him. It was a mission of love, inspired by that noble character which has no peer in the world. When I took that charge of McKinley's honor I swore to my Maker that I would return it unsullied. And when I returned from that memorable convention, proud and satisfied with the work his friends had done, I went to Canton and laid my report at the feet of my chieftain and I said to him, 'McKinley, I have not forgotten the trust and I bring it

back without a blot and not a single promise to redeem.' I think I have a right to feel proud of that, because in the succession of the administration, from Lincoln's time to the present era, no man ever enjoyed that privilege before." Well might that grand Republican warrior, Mark Hanna, pride himself upon his work, for he had rendered to his party and to his country a service the effects of which will be felt for generations. And well may we, as Republicans and patriotic Americans, feel proud of Mark Hanna, under whose masterly generalship the party has won such glorious victories.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1896.

The politics of yesterday is the history of today. Democracy pitted Mr. Bryan against McKinley. The Democratic platform attacked the courts, the currency, the tariff, and the honor of the country. The free and unlimited coinage of silver at a ratio which did not exist was the Democratic panacea for all our ills. We were assured that the price of silver was indissolubly linked with the price of wheat and cotton, and that the prices of commodities would never rise until the price of silver was restored, nor until the value of a dollar was debased fifty per cent. How wild and strange such doctrine sounds now! McKinley met the issue squarely. "When we part with our labor, our products, or our property, we should receive in return money which is as stable and unchanging in value as the ingenuity of honest men can make it. We are learning another thing,

my fellow-citizens; that no matter what kind of money we have, we cannot get it unless we have work. Workingmen want steady work at good wages. They are not satisfied with irregular work at inadequate wages. They want the American standard applied to both. With steady work they want to be paid in sound money. If there is any one thing which should be free from speculation and fluctuation it is the money of a country. Good money never makes bad times. We have the best country and the best men, and we propose to continue to have the best money." The country agreed with McKinley, and in November, 1896, he was elected President. He had said that "doubt in the business world is death to business." Doubt now gave way to certainty. Confidence was restored. The dawn of a golden prosperity began to appear as soon as the result of the election became known. Men felt that a sound currency was assured, and that a protective tariff would soon be enacted.

MCKINLEY'S ADMINISTRATION.

The President was inaugurated March 4, 1897. He at once called Congress together in special session to wipe the Wilson bill from the statute book and to enact an American protective tariff. On July 24 that work had been completed by the approval of the "Dingley tariff bill," the excellent measure which is the law at present. At once a new spirit infused the productive agencies of the country. Confidence reappeared. Hoarded capital returned to the

channels of trade. Industry roused itself from its long lethargy. The legislation which had held the business activity of the country in bonds no longer existed. Prosperity spread itself throughout the land. The sombre brow of labor cleared. The troubled face of the merchant brightened with the hope and cheer of new opportunity. As if at the touch of some magical wand, industry and plenty succeeded prostration and want. The commerce of the country increased by leaps and bounds. "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." Our captains of industry invaded the markets of the Old World and exchanged our products with mutual profit. For more than a century of time, during the entire interval between the formation of our Government and the retirement of Cleveland from the presidency, the total excess of our exports over imports had been only 357 million dollars. In the last year alone of McKinley's administration that excess was 665 millions of dollars—nearly double what it had been in the entire preceding one hundred and seven years; and in the four years of McKinley's term of office the grand total of our excess of exports over imports reached the stupendous and inconceivable sum of two billion three hundred and fifty-four million dollars—an increase in four years of two billion dollars over the entire excess of the previous 107 years! Such figures well nigh stagger the perceptive faculties; and yet it is only by figures that we can measure the vast march made by our commerce in the last few years.

WAR CLOUDS.

McKinley was a man of peace ; he hated the horrors and barbarisms of war ; yet he had hardly taken the oath of office before the sky was darkened with the grim portents of war. Spain, in the fifteenth century the mightiest power of the world, had formerly held half the western hemisphere subject to her empire. Her sway, always despotic and corrupt, had been shaken off, until, in 1896, the Antilles—the fairest and the last gem that remained in her imperial diadem, of all her western domain—rose in a death struggle with their oppressor. Cuba and Porto Rico lay in such close proximity to us as to be almost at our door. The fight for liberty made by the inhabitants of these islands was so heroic as to enlist the patriotic sympathies of our entire population. In her efforts to suppress the rebellion Spain conducted herself with mediæval ferocity. Our Government had repeatedly made respectful representations to Spain that our interests were imperiled by the situation, and that such a condition could not be permitted to exist indefinitely. The Spanish Government turned a deaf ear to our remonstrances. Many resolutions had been introduced in Congress concerning the Cuban situation, and the Cuban status had been earnestly debated from every point of view. The feeling of the country was unmistakable. In mass meetings, in the press, in every channel of popular expression, the voice of the nation was for intervention. McKinley, almost alone,

stood like a rock for the exhaustion of every expedient known to diplomacy before allowing the dread appeal to arms. In his efforts to maintain peace he almost came to the breaking point with his most intimate friends and most trusted advisers. In this state of extreme tension one of our new battleships, the *Maine*, was blown up while peacefully lying in Havana harbor. Still the President "forbore to open the purple testament of bleeding war." The gallant Sigsbee cabled, "Suspend judgment." An investigation was held, but when it had been pronounced, after a most searching examination, that the *Maine* had been blown up by a submarine mine, all men knew that we had come to the parting of the ways.

WAR WITH SPAIN.

On April 18, 1898, war was formally declared to exist between the United States and Spain. The war was prosecuted with the utmost vigor and brought to a victorious ending within a hundred days. Once more American valor had been proved on land and sea and new glory crowned our arms. Manila bay, Santiago, and San Juan were added to the fields of American heroism, and the names of Dewey and Schley, Sampson and Roosevelt, and a host of others were writ large upon the roll of fame. Cuba was free. The heel of despotism was lifted from the necks of eight millions of Asiatics in the Philippines and a just and benign sway extended over a thousand islands in the tropics of the

Orient. Many of our well-meaning people viewed the acquisition of our insular possessions with apprehension and foreboding.

MCKINLEY ON EXPANSION.

But McKinley went straight ahead. In his view, "the prophets of evil were not the builders of the Republic, nor, in its crises since, have they saved or served it. We will solve the problems which confront us untrammelled by the past, and wisely and courageously pursue a policy of right and justice in all things, making the future, under God, even more glorious than the past. As heretofore, so hereafter, will the nation demonstrate its fitness to administer any new estate which events devolve upon it, and in the fear of God will 'take occasion by the hand and make the bounds of freedom wider yet.'" This prophecy has been fully justified. The new and perplexing questions resulting from the Spanish war have been conscientiously met and equitably settled. Our domain has stretched across the Pacific, and under the guidance of a statesmanship of transcendent ability no foreign complications have ensued. Our flag and our arms are respected in every quarter of the globe. Of a sudden the United States has become a world power not only in territory and in military prestige, but in commerce as well. That commerce is protected by a new American navy which compels the admiration of all nations. The rights of American citizenship are conceded in the uttermost ends of the earth. Any infringement of those

rights, whether in China, in Turkey, or in darkest Siberia, is met with an instant demand for reparation, and the power exists to enforce every just demand.

PANAMA CANAL.

In that magnificent valedictory to the American people delivered at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, he left to us as a legacy, which appeals to us with solemn force just now; this sentiment: "We must build the Isthmian canal, which will unite the two oceans and give a straight line of water communication with the western coasts of Central America, South America, and Mexico." And to that scholarly contingent which is tendering aid and comfort to the disloyal attempt to defeat the construction of the Panama canal he would have said kindly, yet sadly, "O, ye of little faith, be not afraid!"

THIRD-TERM TALK.

Hardly had McKinley been inaugurated President the second time when a movement began to shape itself for his renomination.

It was felt by many that to interrupt a prosperity so widely distributed and so marvelous by a change of administration, would be little less than a national calamity. What Washington would not have and Grant could not obtain, McKinley, had he lived, might have had thrust upon him. He declined absolutely to countenance or even to consider this suggestion. But, except for the hand of the

assassin, it is far from impossible that the precedent and prejudice of more than a century would have been broken.

During his administration a spirit of contentment and good will prevailed to a degree without parallel since the early days of the Republic. By his broad and sympathetic charity and his kindly and tactful expressions he progressed farther in obliterating the estrangement which had lingered between the sections of our country as a result of the rebellion, than any President since Lincoln. He inspired a spirit of peace and amity in all men. Hear him on the most distracting issue of the time: "I believe in the common brotherhood of men. I believe that labor gets on best when capital gets on best, and that capital gets on best when labor is paid the most. Every attempt to array class against class, 'the classes against the masses,' section against section, labor against capital, 'the poor against the rich,' or interest against interest in the United States is in the highest degree reprehensible. The most un-American of all appeals is the one which seeks to array labor against capital, employer against employed."

EMINENT QUALITIES.

William McKinley was a broad, constructive statesman—wise, capable, conservative, courageous, and safe. He had an elevated character, lofty ideals, a cheerful optimism, and an unbounded faith in the rectitude of the judgments of the American people. His loyalty to his friends was absolute, and his confidence, once bestowed, was implicit. It was a

common remark that he bore a strong resemblance to Napoleon Bonaparte, and he inspired his followers with the spirit which animated the Old Guard. When he spoke from the platform his form seemed to dilate, and he towered above his surroundings. As he warmed to his subject he spoke with a grace of diction and a fervor of conviction that produced the magnetic effect of one inspired. His addresses upon every conceivable topic were models of arrangement and style. He had a unique faculty, amounting to a genius, for concise, luminous, and epigrammatic statement. His pithy sayings were used as texts by other campaign orators. For symmetry, lucidity, and purity his speeches were masterpieces of forensic eloquence, and their number was legion. For twenty-five years he was in the greatest demand as a speaker in all parts of the country, and campaign committees and States vied with each other in their rivalry to secure his presence. For a quarter of a century his life had been one long campaign. He made the most phenomenal stumping tours in history. He sometimes made twenty speeches in a day. While campaigning he has been known to average fifteen speeches a day for a period of two months, and to return from his tour in as good physical condition as when he started. It is estimated that during his public life he had personally addressed ten millions of people. His nature was sweet, kindly, and affectionate. His love of little children was touching, and his constant and tender devotion to an invalid wife was an idyl of sentiment. He attended her through her years of delicate health with the courtesy of a knight-errant and the solicitude of a lover, and their whole

married life was a type of the holiness of a perfect union. His voice was well modulated and musical and of that clarion clearness and vibrant resonance which enables the perfect orator to make himself audible to the largest assemblies and to play upon the emotions of his hearers as upon an instrument. Henry Clay, John B. Gough, and Henry Ward Beecher, among men of recent times, have produced similar effects. His intellectual vision embraced a continent, and his utterances comprehended and clarified every important question that has agitated the public mind for a generation.

THE LAST SCENE.

Thursday, September 5, 1901, had been designated as President's Day at the great Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo. The President was greeted with the acclamations of countless throngs, the joyous ringing of bells, the booming of cannon, the music of patriotic airs, and every manifestation of popular joy and pride. Here he delivered an oration which for its weight, its lofty tone, and its farsighted statesmanship will rank with Washington's farewell address to his countrymen. The next day a magnificent popular reception was tendered him. The President stood in the beautiful Temple of Music and a throng of people formed a line to pass him and shake his hand. The procession had proceeded some time when a little girl greeted the President. She passed on and Mr. McKinley turned and smilingly waved his hand to her. Next came a short Italian and immediately behind him a young man with a cloth wrapped

around his apparently injured right hand. The Italian passed, and the young man who followed put forth his left hand in the act of greeting and at the same time fired two shots from a revolver which he had concealed within the cloth which covered his right hand. One of these proved fatal to the President. Never was such a fiendish act committed since Judas betrayed his Master with a kiss. The assassin was immediately set upon by the secret service men and the crowd. The President, gasping with a mortal wound, with a compassion almost divine, said: "Do not let them hurt him!" As he lost consciousness just before the surgical operation, he murmured, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done," and as his noble spirit took its eternal flight he whispered, "Nearer, my God, to Thee; Thy will, not mine, be done."

HIS GREATNESS.

Such, in brief outline, was his career. The verdict which the historian will pronounce has been anticipated by his contemporaries. He was a wonderful and a great man. He would have been great in any station. True greatness is not to be measured by the arena in which its activities are displayed. Greatness in exalted place has wider recognition and achieves more enduring fame, because of the magnitude of the issues with which it deals and its greater effect upon human events; but inherently, real greatness is not reputation, nor ability, nor rank, nor fame, nor power. It is character. What boots it to humanity that some Cræsus has transferred to his own account so much of gold

and silver and land? Of what avail are the victories of the legions of the war lord over a weaker foe? Will human suffering be comforted by the perusal of the conquests of Alexander or the accumulations of the syndicates? Will posterity be happier from the knowledge that one man was an emperor and another a millionaire? These things are the gilt and tinsel of greatness, the baubles and fripperies of tawdry counterfeits. But the lives and the characters of Washington, of Lincoln, of Grant, of Jefferson, of McKinley, and of Roosevelt will shine through the ages with a radiance that will allay the pangs of millions of human hearts and inspire noble deeds and Christian lives in generations yet unborn. Here is the true greatness of men and of governments. If the youth of our country shall realize this and emulate these grand examples, then, indeed, will our beloved country be blessed of all nations. When we consider the life, the character, and the work of William McKinley; his services to his country as orator, soldier, and statesman; when we are permitted to withdraw the veil of his private and domestic life and to look upon his unfailing courtesy to his neighbors, his unflinching attachment to his friends, and his kindly devotion to his family; when we realize the beauty and purity and the mingled sweetness and strength of the life of this great man of the people, we are convinced that his is "one of the few, the immortal names, that are not born to die." To him may be justly applied the words of England's greatest bard: "His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world, this was a man."

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